

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee **DATE** 23rd March 2022
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PART I

FOR INFORMATION

SLOUGH LOCAL PLAN – INITIAL PREPORT ON CONSULTATION ON THE RELEASE OF GREEN BELT SITES FOR FAMILY HOUSING

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Member's about the results of the consultation exercise which has shown that there is considerable public opposition to the proposed release of Green Belt sites for family housing.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

2.1 The Committee is requested to resolve that

- a) The response to the consultation on the proposed release of Green Belt sites for family housing be noted.

3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

- 3.1 The proposal to increase the supply of family housing in Slough to meet local needs supports the Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 and its priority of having strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhoods.

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

- 3.2 The proposal to increase the supply of family housing in Slough to meet local needs supports the delivery of the 5 Year Plan and the following outcomes in particular:
- Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.
 - Outcome 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of this report.

(b) Risk Management

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Risk/Threat/Opportunity</i>	<i>Mitigation(s)</i>
That the Committee approves the recommendation.	Failure to consider the results of consultation on the proposed release of Green Belt sites for family housing will affect the Council's ability to bring forward the Local Plan and meet local housing needs ..	Agree the recommendations.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications as a result of this report.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The consultation on the "Proposed release of Green Belt Sites for Family Housing" was the third major exercise in the preparation of the Local Plan, following the "Issues and Options" and "Proposed Spatial Strategy" consultations. The previous work has identified a significant shortfall in housing in Slough and a particular shortage of family housing to meet local needs.
- 5.2 The overall shortage of land in Slough means that we cannot meet all of our housing needs within the Borough. At the same time the reliance upon high density brownfield development in places like the centre of Slough means that we are only able to build flats. The mismatch between the type of housing that we are building and our needs has led to overcrowding, people living in unsuitable accommodation and others having to move out of the Borough.
- 5.3 It has also been difficult to get much needed affordable housing in Slough because of viability issues. This is not a problem with Green field sites where 30% to 40% should be able to be provided..
- 5.4 As a result one of the few options that we have for trying to increase the supply of family and affordable housing, is to release some of the remaining Green Belt land in Slough.
- 5.5 Ten possible sites were identified in the "Issues and Options" and "Proposed Spatial Strategy" consultations. These are the only places where residential development

could take place once you have discounted the Colnbrook and Poyle area and other unsuitable locations such as land south of the M4 motorway.

- 5.6 It is recognised that the development of some of these sites would be problematic and so the Council carried out a preliminary “traffic light” assessment of their suitability in order to inform the consultation process. The results of this were as follows:

“GREEN” Suitable

Wexham Park Hospital School of Nursing Wexham Street
Land to rear of Opal Court, Wexham Street
Land east of Wexham Park Hospital
Land east of Rochfords Gardens
Upton Court Park

“AMBER” Possible

Land east of Market Lane
Land south of Blenheim Road

“RED” Unsuitable

St Anthony’s field, Farnham Road
North of Muddy Lane, Stoke Poges Lane
Bloom Park (part of) Middlegreen Road

- 5.7 This assessment adopted a “policy off” approach to the Green Belt. The consultation recognised that Government policy attaches great importance to Green Belts which are intended to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. This means that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered through the preparation of plans where there are “exceptional circumstances” which are “fully evidenced and justified”. This decision will have to be made at the final stage of the Local Plan process when we will know the full extent of the housing need and will be able to balance this against the identified harm to the Green Belt.
- 5.8 The purpose of the consultation was to help to inform this process. Further technical and other work will be required before any decisions can be made. One of the factors to be taken into account is the very high level of public opposition that there is to the principle of building in the Green Belt.
- 5.9 The Consultation Exercise
- 5.10 A public consultation exercise was undertaken between 5th November and 17th December 2021 on the “Proposed Release of Green Belt Sites for Family Housing.”
- 5.11 The consultation was carried out when there were severe Covid restrictions. As a result it was not possible to have exhibitions or hold public meetings. The main ways

in which people were consulted were through emails to everyone on our Local Plan data base, publicity through newspaper adverts, press releases and the Council's web site. We also produced a leaflet which was delivered to every household in Slough.

5.12 A total of 413 responses were received mainly through the consultation website. Importantly we also got responses from the statutory consultees, some adjoining Councils, other interested parties and most of the landowners.

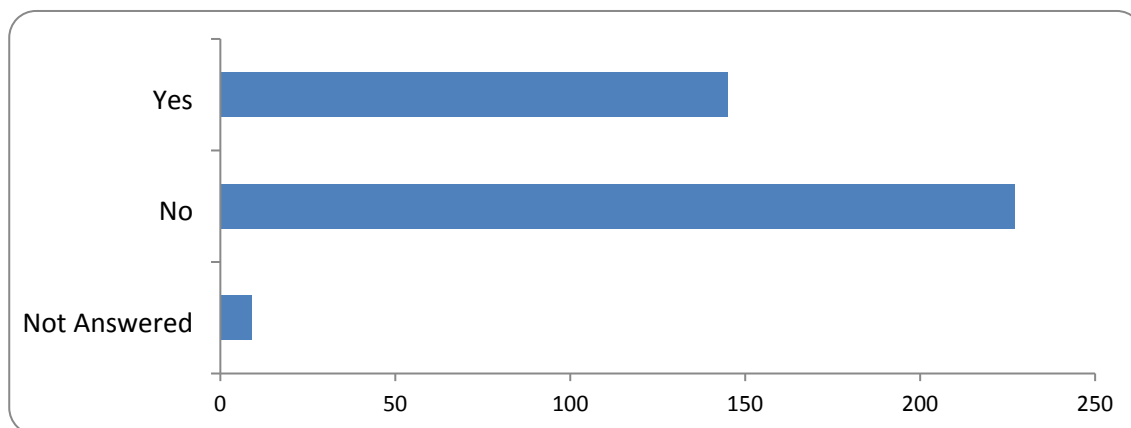
Public Response

5.13 An analysis of the responses to the questions in the questionnaire shows the extent to which the public are opposed to the release of Green Belt for family housing.

5.14 The consultation was carried out on the basis that there is an unmet need for more housing in Slough. The evidence showed that we are currently only building flats and that there is a particular need for family and affordable housing.

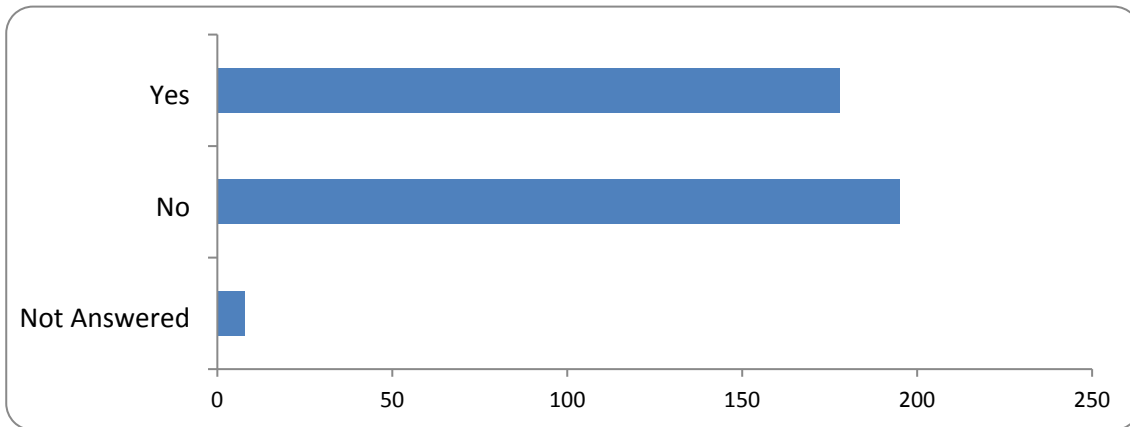
5.15 Despite this around 60% of respondents thought that there was no need for more family housing in Slough.

Do you agree that there is a need for more family housing in Slough?



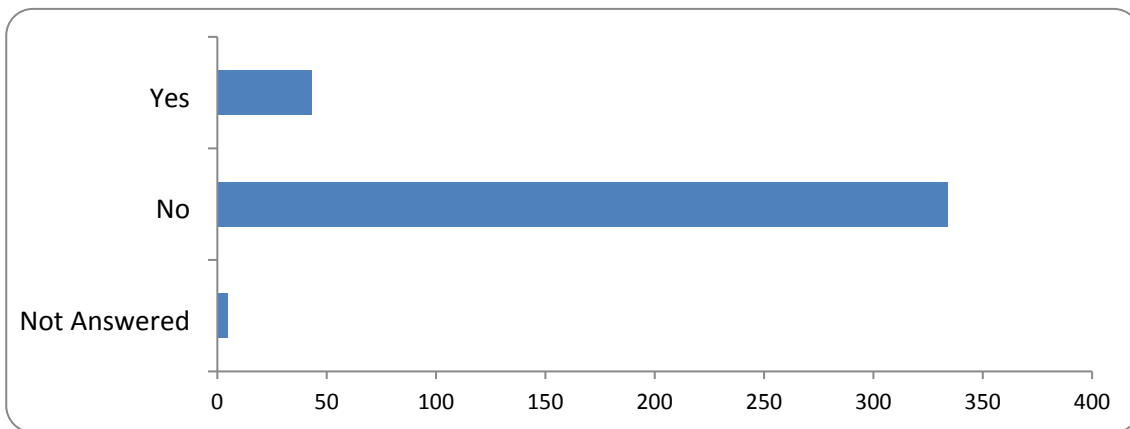
5.16 At the same time just over half of the people who responded thought that there was no need for more affordable family housing in Slough.

Do you think that there is a need for more affordable family housing in Slough?



5.17 As a result when it came to the fundamental question about the proposals only around 11% of respondents thought that that the need for more housing justified building on some Green Belt sites in Slough.

Do you think that this housing need justifies building on some sites in the Green Belt in Slough?



5.18 This reflects the high level of public support for protecting the Green Belt which makes the release of any Green Belt land for housing highly controversial wherever it is proposed.

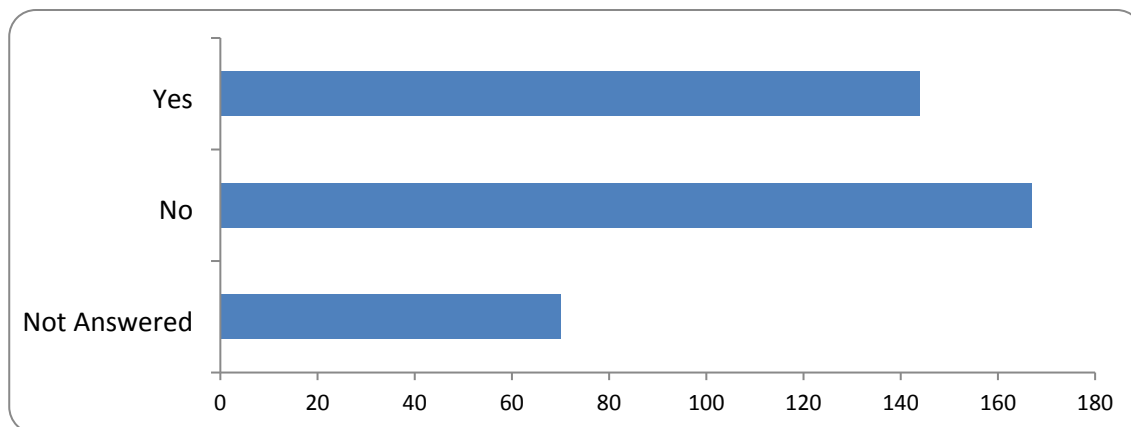
5.19 Whilst the strength of public feeling has to be acknowledged, it also has to be recognised that there was a very low response rate. There was very little feed back from the leaflet delivered to every household. Virtually all of responses came from people who were on our Local Plan data base. These are people who have

previously responded to consultations and in many cases objected to earlier proposals. Approximately 20% of these live outside of but near the Borough.

5.20 Nevertheless the main conclusion that can be drawn from the public consultation is that the vast majority of respondents are opposed to the principle of releasing Green Belt land in Slough for family housing.

5.21 The questionnaire also asked whether people had alternative solutions for providing family housing. The results of this showed that around 40% thought that we should build family housing in Slough's urban areas at a higher density. About 45% thought that we should build family housing outside the Borough but close to Slough.

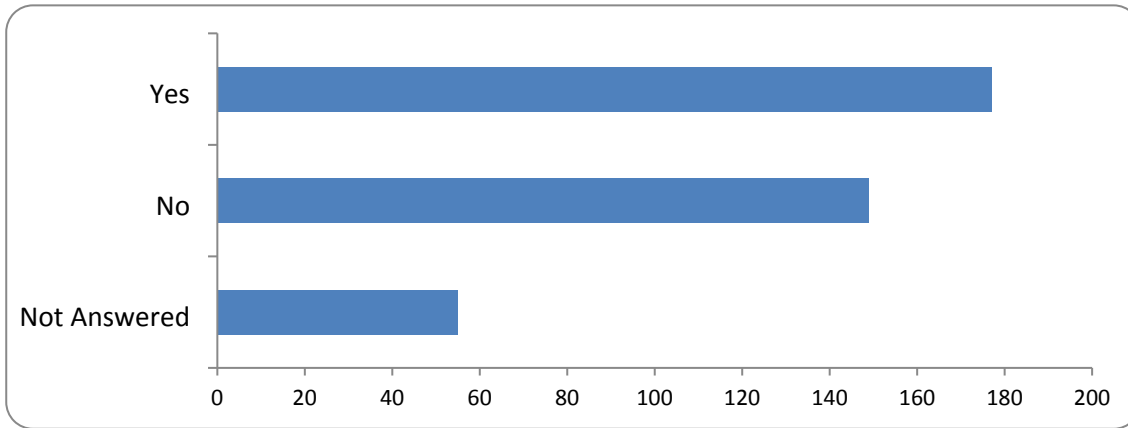
As an alternative should we build family housing in Slough's urban areas at a higher density?



5.22 The main reason that we have a shortage of family housing is that we are already building at very high densities in places like the centre of Slough which means that you can only provide flats. The only other alternative would be to redevelop some of the suburban areas at a higher density. This would result in the loss of existing family housing. The Protecting the Suburbs report (2020) showed that it was not practical, viable, sustainable or desirable to allow any of the family housing to be lost in this way.

5.23 One element of the Spatial Strategy is to “promote the cross border expansion of Slough to meet unmet housing needs” When asked about this over 45% of respondents agreed with this approach.

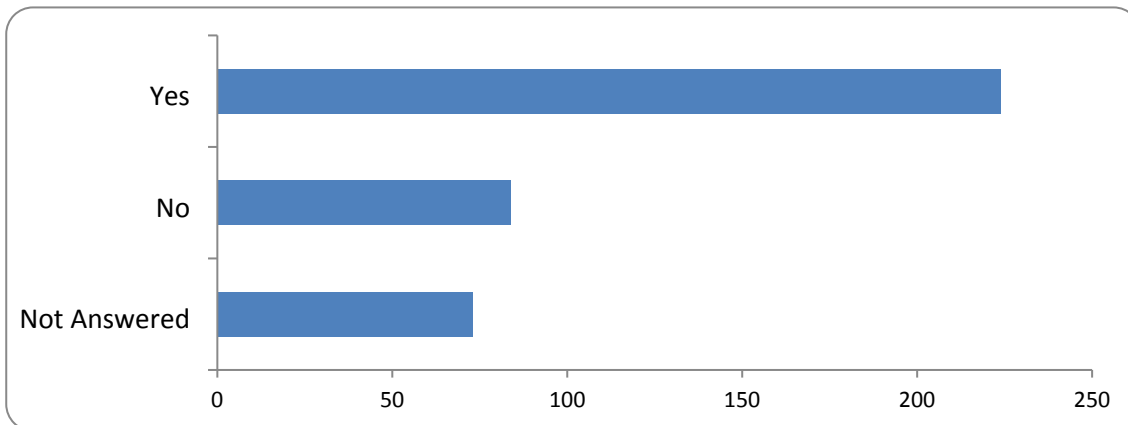
As an alternative should we build family housing outside the Borough close to Slough?



5.24 Whilst there appears to be support for building outside of Slough it has to be recognised that this would inevitably involve building in the Green Belt which the majority of respondents are opposed to in principle. It would also be hard to justify asking others to meet our unmet housing need if we have not met the test of “leaving no stone unturned” in our search for sites in Slough.

5.25 Not meeting Slough’s housing needs would obviously come at a cost to some people. When asked about the consequences of this nearly 60% of respondents agreed that it was right not to build family housing in the Green Belt even if it meant people would have to move away from Slough.

As an alternative should we not provide for family housing within or near Slough (people may have to move away from the Slough area)



- 5.26 In addition to making our housing problems more acute, it would be very difficult for us to bring forward a Local Plan which did not seek to meet our objectively assessed housing needs and had no alternative solutions.
- 5.27 Nevertheless it has to be recognised that the conclusion from the consultation was that the public are opposed to releasing Green Belt sites for family housing.
- 5.28 An analysis of the response to the individual sites, which is set out in Appendix A. shows that the opposition to the release of Green Belt was not the result of objections to a particular site. Even the least contentious sites, such as Rochfords Gardens and Wexham School of Nursing, still had over 55% of respondents opposed to their development. Whilst Market Lane, Blenheim Road and Bloom Park had over 70% of people opposed to them being developed.

Other Responses .

- 5.29 As part of the consultation we also consulted the specialist bodies that we are legally obliged to, these include the Statutory” consultees, and surrounding Local Authorities and other interested parties.
- 5.30 **Buckinghamshire Council** welcomes your position that you are trying to meet your local housing need within your own boundaries however, BC does not consider that the detail highlighted in this consultation document constitutes a robust evidence base in particular the results of thorough testing of the supply of land from brownfield sites, urban capacity studies and employment land review and therefore, highlights a serious gap in evidence.
- 5.31 It is concerned that the consultation document fails to mention any form of Green Belt review to assess how land parcels are performing against the 5 Green Belt purposes set out in national planning policy.
- 5.32 The Local Plan for Buckinghamshire is at a very early stage of preparation and the level of needs which it will have to accommodate is not known. Buckingham Council does not have evidence to establish if it can accommodate its own housing needs or the unmet needs of other Local Planning Authorities.
- 5.33 Buckinghamshire Council is concerned about the potential cross-boundary impacts including those for highway/transportation, education and flood risk
- 5.34 **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead** support and understand the need to consider releasing sites within the greenbelt due to exceptional circumstances. It is also noted that these sites would specifically meet the needs of family housing, which

is welcome. That said, it is imperative that the sites proposed for release are the right sites in the right location.

- 5.35 With regards to adjoining sites, they have no in principle objection to the development of Upton Farm but have concerns about the Blenheim Road Site.
- 5.36 The **Environment Agency** noted that parts of the Blenheim Road and Market Lane sites fall within flood zones 2 and 3a and ask that that evidence is provided that the flood risk sequential test and the appropriate assessments have been undertaken for these sites.
- 5.37 **National Highways** (formerly Highways Agency) commented that they would be concerned if any material increase in traffic were to occur on the Strategic Road Network or at its junctions because of planned growth within the borough, without careful consideration of mitigation measures. It is important that the Local Plan provide the planning policy framework to ensure development cannot progress without the appropriate infrastructure being in place. The majority of the sites are to the north of Slough, however there are some in relative close proximity to SRN junctions, namely Junctions 5 and 6 of the M4. Of particular note are Sites 6 & 7; Land East of Market Lane and Land South of Blenheim Road, which could potentially deliver 300 and 200 dwellings respectively.
- 5.38 **Historic England** objected to the Blenheim Road site and **Natural England** raised objections relating to the impact of some sites on Burnham Beeches. These are explained in more detail in Appendix A which deals with the responses to individual sites.
- 5.39 Responses were received from most of the landowners of the proposed sites. These are set out in detail in Appendix A. Critically it appears that the owners of the Muddy Lane, St Anthony's Field and Bloom Park sites (which include the Council) are not promoting their sites for development. It is not clear whether the owner of Upton Farm is actively promoting this site. As a result not all of the proposed sites can be considered to be available. The owners of all of the other sites have confirmed that they could be developed for family housing as envisaged in the consultation.
- 5.40 There were a number of proposals for development with the Colnbrook and Poyle area. This is currently discounted because they would be contrary to a key element of the Proposed Spatial Strategy of "Protecting the Strategic Gap between Slough and Greater London". Sites within this area would have to be considered if a change to the Proposed Spatial Strategy was being proposed.
- 5.41 Apart from these, no new housing sites were identified within the Borough. It was however suggested that the site at Muddy Lane should be expanded to include the

church to the south and the whole of the land at Upton Court Farm should be considered for housing.

5.42 There were a number of submissions from landowners outside of Slough who are seeking to promote their sites for housing development. Although this is helpful background information, these fall outside the scope of this consultation.

5.43 The consultation recognised that a lot more technical work would be needed before any decision could be made about allocating any of the proposed sites for family housing development. The issues raised by the respondents to the consultation help to establish what the range and extent of further evidence gathering will need to be. This will need to be fed into future work programmes for the Local Plan. Part of this evidence will be the final part of Wider Area Growth Study which it is hoped to publish shortly. On going discussions will also take place as part of Duty to Cooperate requirements. We will also be seeking more information from the landowners and statutory consultees.

6 Conclusions

6.1 The purpose of the consultation was to consult on the suitability of selected sites within the Green Belt in order to provide much needed family housing.

6.2 The majority of respondents to the consultation were opposed to the development of Green Belt sites. One of the factors which contributed to this was that, despite the evidence, the respondents did not agree that there was a need for more family housing or affordable housing in the first place.

6.3 Respondents have also raised a number of policy and technical concerns about the proposed release of Green Belt sites for family housing. As a result, further work and discussions will have to be carried out.

6.4 A decision about whether any of the sites should be allocated for housing will have to be made at a later stage in the Local Plan process when we will know the full extent of the housing need and will be able to balance this against the identified harm to the Green Belt.

7 Background Papers

Local Plan for Slough – Issues and Options Consultation Document (2017)

Slough Local Plan Proposed Spatial Strategy (2020)

The Proposed Release of Green Belt Sites for Family Housing (2021)

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Response to Individual Sites Proposed for Release from the Green Belt for Family Housing.

APPENDIX A

Response to Individual Sites Proposed for Release from the Green Belt for Family Housing.

This section summarises the responses to the individual sites and sets out some of the key points made by respondents including the landowners.

In order to provide some context it also sets out what the Council's preliminary "traffic light assessment" of the sites were in terms of being "suitable" "uncertain" or "unsuitable" for development.

SITE 1 – WEXHAM PARK HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

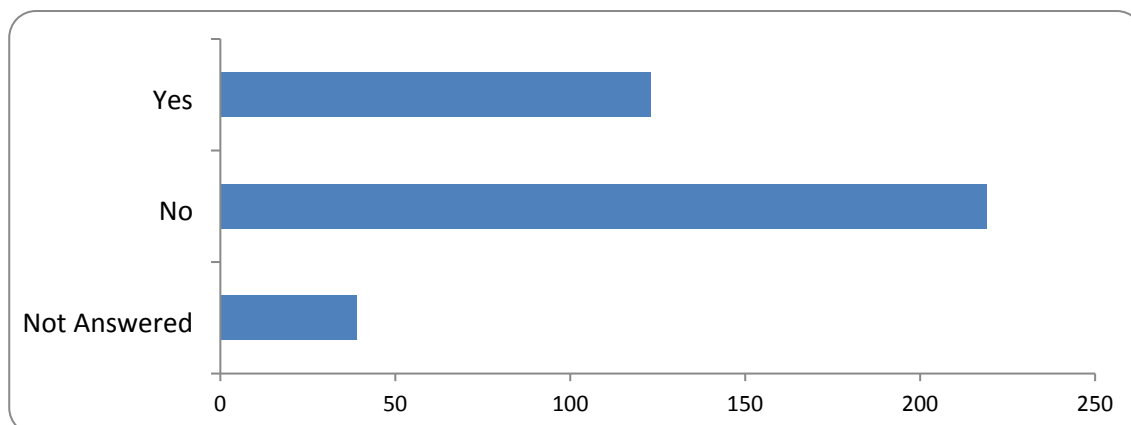
Traffic light assessment from Consultation Document - GREEN

There are no fundamental policy objections to the development of the cluster of sites around Wexham Park Hospital. Land to the south was released from the Green Belt in the 2004 Local Plan and the three proposed sites would result in the rounding off of development in the area.

As a result the Wexham Park Hospital School of Nursing is considered to be a "suitable" site for housing development.

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 1 - Wexham Park Hospital School of Nursing is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Natural England:

Due to new evidence on the impacts of recreational and urban growth at Burnham Beeches SAC carried out by Footprint Ecology in 2019, Natural England recognises that new housing within 5.6km of the internationally designated Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC) can be expected to result in an increase in recreation pressure.

We are aware that Slough Borough Council are working on a draft mitigation strategy which will seek to enhance Upton Court Park and to manage the park as a SANG. However, Upton Court Park is located toward the South of the borough and new bespoke mitigation will be required for new residential development coming forward in the North.

Response from Landowner

Frimley Park NHS Trust:

The site can be defined as previously developed land and comprises a number of non-clinical buildings associated with Trust's site operations. The existing buildings on the site have come in and out of use over time for non-patient facing uses as demands on the Trust have fluctuated. The buildings are however outdated and are no longer fit for purpose.

The site is being assessed for potential release from the Green Belt for family housing through the Local Plan process which the Trust continue to support. However, we would welcome discussions with the Council during the Local Plan preparation to ensure future local planning policies can accommodate the changing needs and demands of the Trust over time whilst remaining sound in line with the requirements of the NPPF. For example, and as set out in the Council's commentary on the site, if the Trust may require additional accommodation for healthcare workers this would need to be located on the site and could increase the density of the site's capacity by delivering apartments to meet this need as opposed to family housing.

SITE 2 – LAND TO THE REAR OF OPAL COURT, WEXHAM STREET

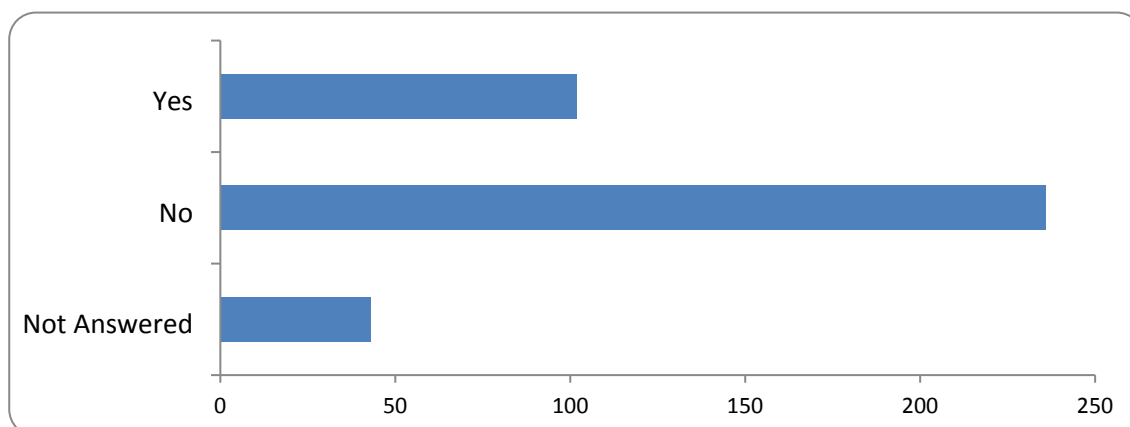
Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document - GREEN

There are no fundamental policy objections to the development of the cluster of sites around Wexham Park Hospital. Land to the south was released from the Green Belt in the 2004 Local Plan and the three proposed sites would result in the rounding off of development in the area.

*As a result the land to the rear of Opal Court, Wexham Street is considered to be a “**suitable**” site for housing development.*

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 2 – Land to the rear of Opal Court Wexham Street is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Natural England:

Due to new evidence on the impacts of recreational and urban growth at Burnham Beeches SAC carried out by Footprint Ecology in 2019, Natural England recognises that new housing within 5.6km of the internationally designated Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC) can be expected to result in an increase in recreation pressure.

We are aware that Slough Borough Council are working on a draft mitigation strategy which will seek to enhance Upton Court Park and to manage the park as a SANG. However, Upton Court Park is located toward the South of the borough and new bespoke mitigation will be required for new residential development coming forward in the North.

Response from Landowner

Frimley Park NHS Trust:

As part of the Trust’s long-term masterplanning of the Wexham Hospital site, the Trust will seek to focus future improvement works and redevelopment within the existing hospital built area rather than spreading future hospital services over a larger area of land.

As a result of this changing approach to how healthcare is and will be delivered on the Wexham Hospital site, the land to the East of Opal Court is surplus to requirement for health purposes given its location outside of the existing campus footprint and away from the core area of the hospital. The allocation and future disposal of the site for family housing will also provide additional funding and enable investment back into the Wexham Hospital site for ongoing improvements and developments associated with the established healthcare use.

SITE 3 – LAND EAST OF WEXHAM PARK HOSPITAL

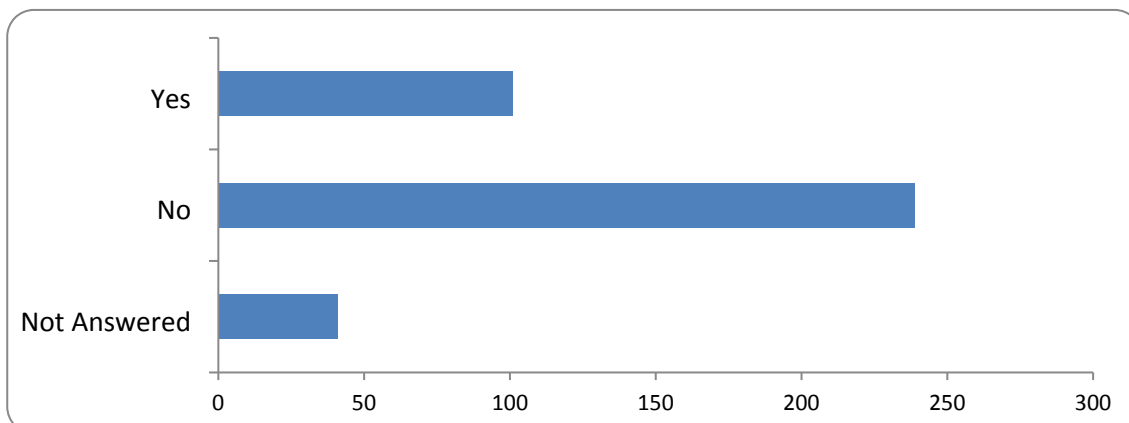
Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document - GREEN

There are no fundamental policy objections to the development of the cluster of sites around Wexham Park Hospital. Land to the south was released from the Green Belt in the 2004 Local Plan and the three proposed sites would result in the rounding off of development in the area.

As a result the land east of Wexham Park Hospital is considered to be a “suitable” for housing development.

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 3 – Land east of Wexham Park Hospital is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Natural England:

Due to new evidence on the impacts of recreational and urban growth at Burnham Beeches SAC carried out by Footprint Ecology in 2019, Natural England recognises that new housing within 5.6km of the internationally designated Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC) can be expected to result in an increase in recreation pressure.

We are aware that Slough Borough Council are working on a draft mitigation strategy which will seek to enhance Upton Court Park and to manage the park as a SANG. However, Upton Court Park is located toward the South of the borough and new bespoke mitigation will be required for new residential development coming forward in the North.

Response from Landowner

Reside Housing Developments Ltd.

Reside support and welcome its inclusion and 'Green-Suitable' rating within the consultation document. Reside have produced a Vision Document for the site, which is submitted alongside these representations. This sets out that the site is available and suitable for development, with no technical constraints which would restrict the site delivering Family Housing within Slough Borough Council. The site is capable of delivering a range of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom houses to help address the need for family housing. We confirm that there would be no abnormal costs or viability issues for the site that would restrict a policy compliant level of affordable housing being delivered on the site. Reside regularly provide self/custom build plots within our applications and would be willing to provide a percentage of plots on site to support the needed addressed at paragraph 6.5.

The Vision Document includes a Illustrative Masterplan capable of delivering 70 homes. Therefore, Reside believe the site is capable of achieving the upper end of the capacity range stated.

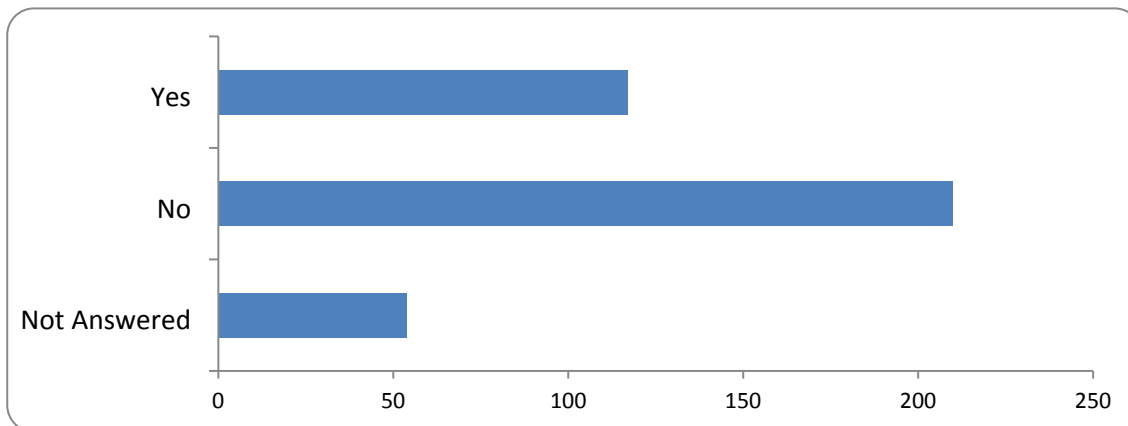
SITE 4 – LAND EAST OF ROCHFORDS GARDENS

Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document - GREEN

Land east of Rochfords Gardens is a natural infilling site because it is surrounded by development on three sides. It is field with no intrinsic qualities. As a result it is considered to be a “suitable” site for housing development.

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 4 – Land East of Rochfords Gardens is suitable for family housing?



Response from Landowner

Hampstead Parochial Charities (HPC)

HPC owns land identified off Rochford Gardens (Site 4) and supports the Council's proposed release of the land from the Green Belt and identified capacity of at least 50 new homes.

HPC confirms that the site is available for development. Furthermore, HPC considers that the site's characteristics and mix of existing housing on neighbouring land would lead itself to addressing the Council's housing need, in particular for more family homes of three bedrooms or more.

HPC confirms that the site is available

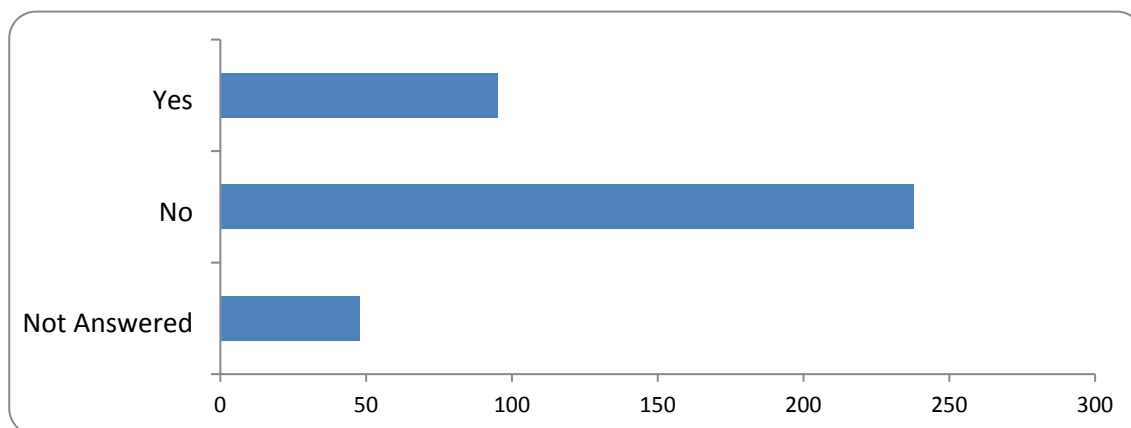
SITE 5 – UPTON COURT FARM

Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document - GREEN

The land at Upton Court Farm is a partly underutilised site close to the centre of Slough. It has a number of buildings on the northern side fronting Upton Court Road and is well contained. As a result, on balance, this is considered to be a "suitable" site for residential development.

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 5 – Upton Court Farm is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

We have no 'in principle' concerns around the release of this site and it forms a logical greenbelt release site which will actively contribute towards meeting the identified unmet need. We foresee no strategic impact as a result of this allocation.

Response from Landowner

The landowner has not confirmed the availability of this site for development but did question why the open land to the south had not been included as a possible housing site.

SITE 6 – LAND EAST OF MARKET LANE

Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document - AMBER

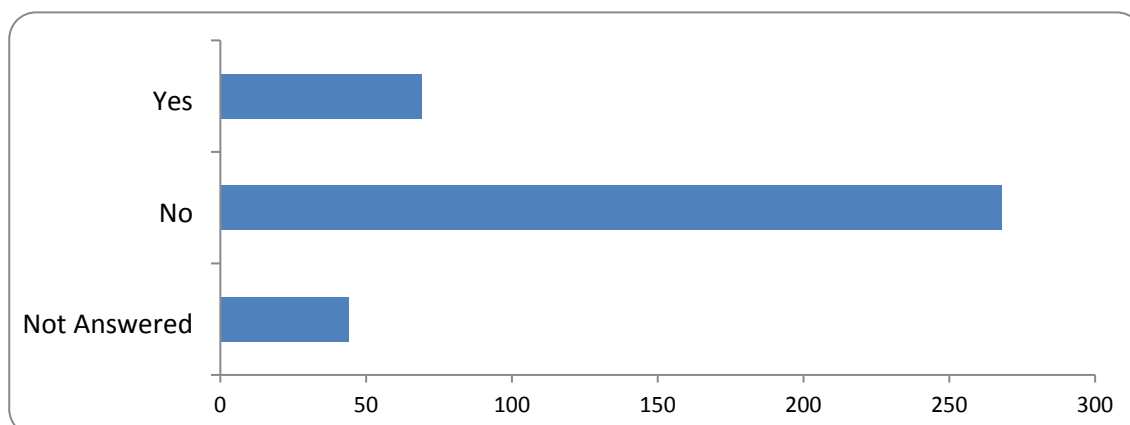
The land east of Market Lane is part of the Colne Valley Park and forms part of the Strategic Gap between Slough and Greater London.

The site was also identified for possible housing development in the Slough Northern Extension study produced by Atkins in 2017 and forms part of the area of search for major housing development in the Wider Area Growth Study which is being produced by Stantec.

*As a result it remains as a “**possible**” housing site but it is considered that it should only come forward as part of a wider comprehensive development where a full mitigation package can be provided..*

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 6 – Land east of Market Lane is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Colne Valley Regional Park:

We object to Site 6 'Land east of Market Lane' because:

- The site is located within the Colne Valley Regional Park and the Strategic Gap
- The Horton Brook runs across the site and the northern part of the site is in Flood Zone 3. The northern and middle section of the site used for agriculture – making a contribution to the rural economy whilst also serving as Green Belt and delivering on the objectives of the Colne Valley Regional Park. The whole site is suitable for agricultural use.
- It will breach a clear urban edge that Market Lane represents. The site will have a massive impact on the perception of countryside for those driving or walking along Market Lane as it will turn it from an urban/rural edge road to an urban road. The views of the Buckinghamshire Green Belt from Market Lane and Parlaunt Road are wide-ranging and extensive looking over land used for agriculture. To use the strip that happens to be in Slough for housing would ruin this.
- This does not create a revised clearly defensible Green Belt boundary "using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent." (NPPF para 143f). The current Green Belt Boundary of Market Lane serves this purpose and should be retained as the Green Belt boundary. The council do not reference to NPPF para 143f in the consultation document although they do recognise that it "would represent a substantial extension of the built up area into the countryside".

The Council's Environmental Management team::

Within proposed plans drafted by Network Rail in 2020, all the land north of Horton Ditch at Site 6 (and the north east of Site 6) would be required to facilitate the Portal Access building – it is not just access that is required across this plot of land. The Portal Access

Building is where the new rail line would cease to be in a cutting and would enter the tunnelled section of the route. Unlike a standard tunnel shaft building, this building could not be relocated as the route is required to pass under the Great Western Main Line in this area and is constrained on the depth that can be achieved to do so, and then thereafter requires to attain sufficient depth to clear surface features and substructures to the south at North Park and beyond. As noted in the consultation there is to be enhancement of the Horton Brook as part of the proposed scheme mitigation and new footpaths/ bridleways are proposed to be adopted across Site 6. This would necessitate the safeguarding of swaths of land to both the north and south of Horton Brook. The scheme is also proposing landscape screening along the western boundary of Site 6 with Market Lane.

Whilst the Western Rail Link to Heathrow scheme does not currently propose any permanent land-take to the south of Horton Brook in Site 6, this land has been included in construction logistics plans to facilitate construction of the Portal Access Building, a tunnel shaft building on the northern side of North Park (to the west of Richings Park), and to support the tunnelling works – one of the road to rail interchanges during the construction phase would be at Hollow Hill Bridge immediately north west of Site 6.

It is therefore judged that the land east of Market Lane should not be considered suitable for release from Greenbelt for family housing at the current time as it could compromise the viability of, or greatly increase the significance of environmental impacts from, the Great Western Rail Link to Heathrow scheme, which is a key infrastructure scheme both nationally and locally.

Response from Landowners

Taylor Wimpey

Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land is committed to working with the other promoters / landowners to ensure that Site 6 is comprehensively master planned to ensure that its development potential to deliver family housing is maximised, and that a high quality development is delivered.

As demonstrated by the Concept Masterplan, the Site has a capacity of up to 150 dwellings at 40dph, which is appropriate to provide family housing. An affordable housing provision of up to 40% (approximately 60 dwellings), in-line with the adopted Core Strategy Core Policy 4, can be provided as part a development of the Site.

Dandara control a 4.4-hectare site in an area to the East of Market Lane, Langley, referred to as Site 6 in the ongoing consultation.

Dandra Limited

Dandara welcome the recognition by the Council that there is a chronic need for more family housing in the Borough and identification of the site as a possible site for Green Belt release.

Whilst Dandara believe that the whole area has potential, as is recognised by the area forming part of the wider North of Slough proposal there is no reason why the land to the south could not be released from the Green Belt in the short term as a stand alone

development site, which could be integrated into a wider development area in the longer term is this were deemed necessary and appropriate.

They have prepared a masterplan for the site which shows how between 140 and 160 dwellings could be accommodated on the site at a density of between 40 and 45 dwellings per hectare.

Dandra have some concerns with the conclusions in relation to site 6 including to the fact the Council's initial assessment of the site classifies it as 'possibly suitable' and not suitable,.

SITE 7 – LAND SOUTH OF BLENHEIM ROAD

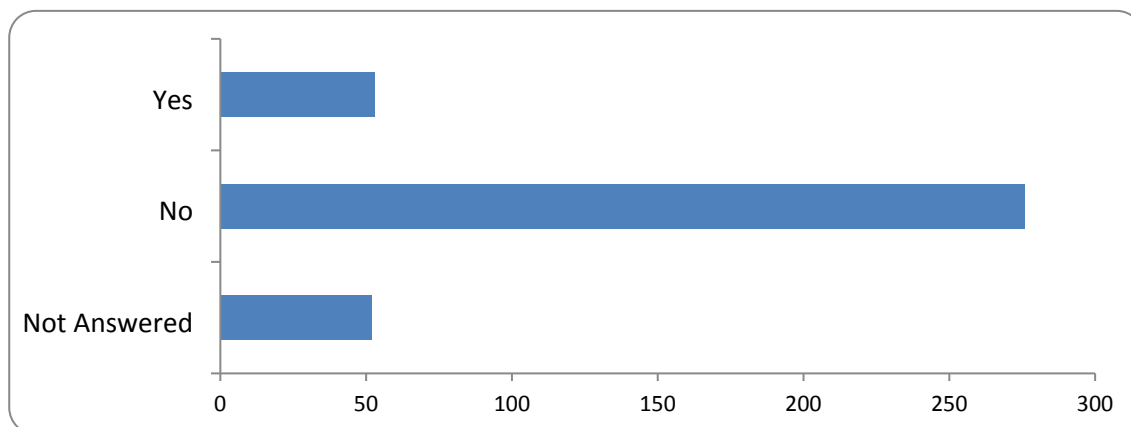
Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document - AMBER

The land south of Blenheim Road is adjacent to the recent Kings Reach housing development which was released from the Green Belt for housing development in the 2004 Local Plan for Slough. One of the reasons why the proposed site was not allocated for housing at that time was that it formed part of the designated Ditton Park Historic Park and Garden. Any harm or loss of a designated heritage asset such as a registered park and garden requires exceptional, clear and convincing justification.

*The site is not in the same ownership as the rest of the park and has no discernible historic features. As a result it remains as a “**possible**” housing site provided heritage objections can be overcome with suitable mitigation.*

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site Site 7 - Land South of Blenheim Road is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Historic England

Objects to the inclusion of Site 7: Land south of Blenheim Road. This is because the proposed allocation is located within a grade II registered park (a designated heritage asset) and the proposed allocation would cause a high level of harm to the significance of the registered park.

The Berkshire Garden's Trust

Object in principle to housing on the proposal site due to the significant level of harm to a registered Park & Garden and to the setting of Grade II listed Ditton Manor.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead:

It is our understanding that the site still forms part of this registered park and as such, is an important heritage asset and still has a considerable amount of heritage value. Currently, we see that there is no solid justification for the release of this site, although the site may not 'look' like a park, it is important to consider its function and how that would impact on existing users, some of which may reside within our borough.

This site appears to significantly contribute to the openness of the greenbelt and as such, the impact of development in this specific location may be difficult to support. A full Green Belt Assessment would be required going forward.

Response from Landowner

Bargate Homes:

The illustrative masterplan demonstrates that the site can suitably accommodate approximately 147 new family homes, alongside substantial areas of publicly accessible open space with a parkland character and structural planting

An allocation of the site would ultimately deliver the following benefits:

- 147 family homes, including market and affordable, assisting the Borough in meeting its Local Housing Need
- An appropriate mix, type and tenure of homes, ensuring a more balanced supply in housing provision given the increasing dominance of flatted development in the town;
- A large new landscaped park providing a publicly accessible new green buffer on the southern edge of Slough;
- Enhancement of the historic significance of Ditton Park by providing a robust and appropriate new setting;
- An appropriate long-term, defensible, boundary to a revised area of Green Belt; and
- New cycling and walking routes connecting to the surrounding area.

SITE 8 – ST ANTHONY’S FIELD, FARNHAM LANE

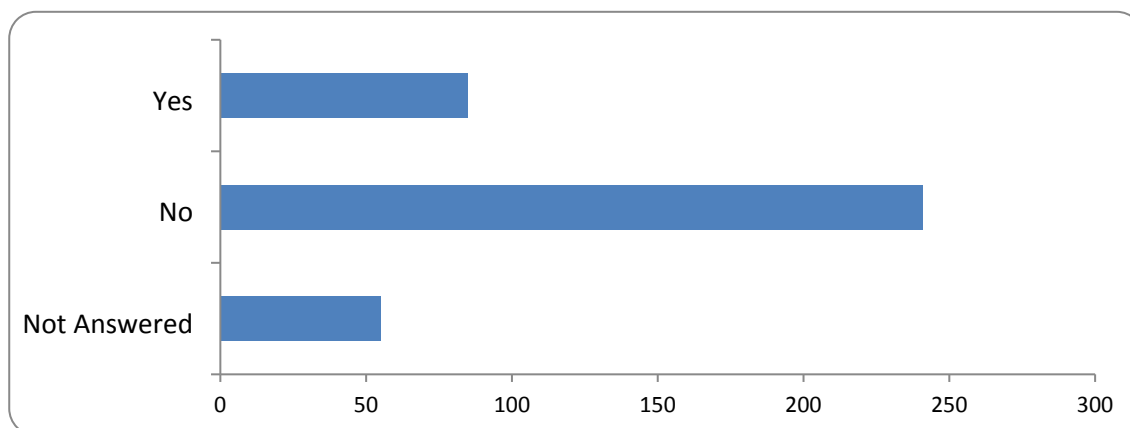
Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document – RED

The development of St Anthony’s Field would have a significant visual impact upon the small gap between Slough and Farnham Royal resulting in the merging of the two settlements. It would also have an impact upon the adjoining Conservation Area.

*It is for these reasons that the site is considered to be “**unsuitable**” for family housing.*

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site 8 - St Anthony’s Field, Farnham Lane is suitable for family housing?



Selected Specific Comment/Objections

Natural England:

Due to new evidence on the impacts of recreational and urban growth at Burnham Beeches SAC carried out by Footprint Ecology in 2019, Natural England recognises that new housing within 5.6km of the internationally designated Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC) can be expected to result in an increase in recreation pressure.

We are aware that Slough Borough Council are working on a draft mitigation strategy which will seek to enhance Upton Court Park and to manage the park as a SANG. However, Upton Court Park is located toward the South of the borough and new bespoke mitigation will be required for new residential development coming forward in the North.

Response from landowner

The Council as landowner is not promoting this site for housing development. The Parks Department has commented that:

This site is under consideration for provision of allotments. Release of this site from green belt for development of family homes would conflict with this ambition. In contrast to housing development, allotments would be more in keeping with the character of the area, the Conservation Area adjacent and the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings.

SITE 9 – NORTH OF MUDDY LANE, STOKE POGES LANE

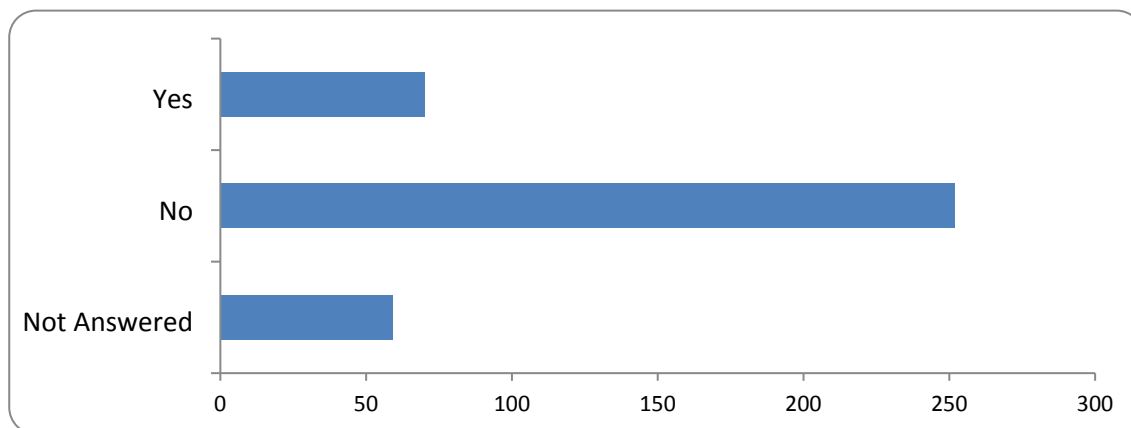
Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document – RED

The site North of Muddy Lane is part of the Singh Sabba sports centre playing field. The site consists of a strip of land along the Stoke Poges Lane frontage which is not delineated on the ground in any way.

*This and the loss of private open space is considered to make this an “**unsuitable**” site for housing development.*

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site Site 9 – North of Muddy is suitable for family housing?



Response from landowner

There was no formal response from the Singh Sabba Sports Centre. They have not previously expressed an interest in developing the site.

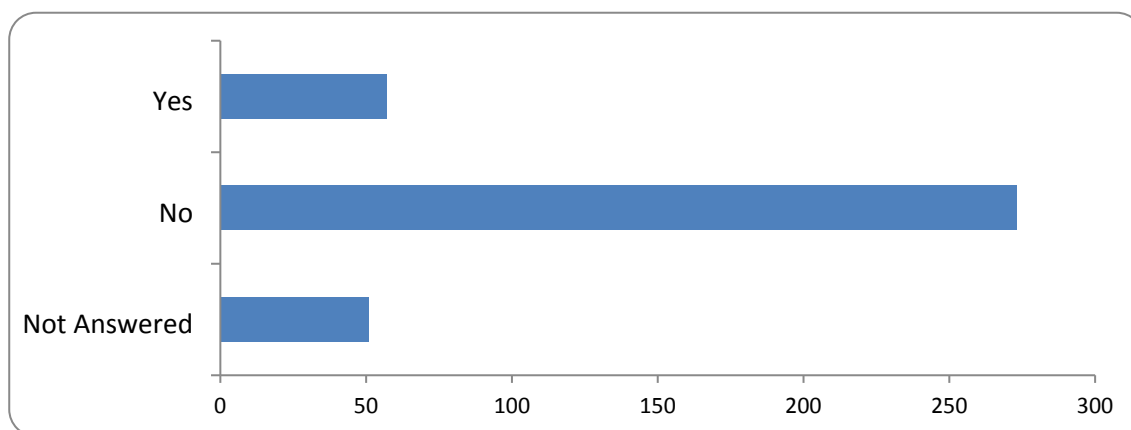
SITE 10 – BLOOM PARK, MIDDLEGREEN ROAD

Traffic Light assessment from Consultation Document – RED

*Building on Bloom Park would result in the loss of public open space. This is considered to be sufficient reason to make this an “**unsuitable**” site for housing development.*

Consultation Response

Do you think that Site Site 10 – Bloom Park Middlegreen Road is suitable for family housing?



Response from landowner

There was no formal response from the Council as landowner.

OTHER SITES

St John the Baptist Church, Stoke Poges Lane

This Green Belt area has been included in the North of Muddy Lane site in previous consultations. It was not included in Site 9 this time which only identified the sports fields to the north of as a possible family housing site and excluded the Singh Sabha centre and car park.

This has left the church site as a bit of an anomaly. Planning permission has recently been granted for a replacement church and church hall on the front of the site but no development was allowed on the open land at the rear because it is in the Green Belt.

Response from Landowners

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Parish of Manor Park St John the Baptist and Whitby Road St Michael has stated:

The green belt boundary should be altered so that the whole church site is removed from the green belt. This would allow the eastern part of the site to be developed for much needed housing in Slough, including a vicarage so that a vicar can live next to the church. This site is particularly suitable for Slough's specific need for family homes (of 3 bedrooms and more), and this is also the prevailing housing type in the area.